



AN ACT CLARIFYING SCHOOL DISTRICT CONSOLIDATIONS AND ANNEXATIONS; AMENDING SECTIONS 20-3-312, 20-6-411, 20-6-414, 20-6-422, AND 20-6-704, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND AN APPLICABILITY DATE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Section 20-3-312, MCA, is amended to read:

"20-3-312. Trustees of district affected by boundary change. The trustees of any district to which the territory of another district is attached as a result of annexation, abandonment, territory transfer, or any other method of changing district boundaries, except by the consolidation of elementary districts, continue to be the trustees of the district with the same powers, duties, and responsibilities and subject to the same limitations provided by law as if there had been no boundary change. In the case of elementary district consolidation, the appointed trustees of the resulting elementary district shall assume their trustee positions under the authority of 20-6-423."

Section 2. Section 20-6-411, MCA, is amended to read:

"20-6-411. Bonded indebtedness to remain with original territory except when assumed by election. Whenever district boundaries are changed in any manner prescribed in this title, the existing bonded indebtedness against any district or territory affected by a change of boundaries ~~shall remain~~ remains the indebtedness of the original territory against which ~~such the~~ bonds were issued and ~~shall~~ must be paid by levies on the original territory, except when elementary districts are consolidated with the mutual assumption of bonded indebtedness or when ~~an elementary~~ a district is annexed with a joint assumption of the annexing district's bonded indebtedness with the annexing district. Any ~~moneys~~ money to the credit of the debt service fund of a district when its boundaries are changed ~~shall~~ must be used to pay the existing bond principal and interest of the original territory issuing ~~such the~~ bonds as it becomes due or for bond redemption under the bonding provisions of this title."

Section 3. Section 20-6-414, MCA, is amended to read:

"20-6-414. Cash disposition when districts consolidated. Whenever two or more districts are consolidated without the mutual assumption of bonded indebtedness, all cash and debts, other than cash credited to the debt service fund and debts for bonded indebtedness, ~~shall~~ must be credited or debited to the same types of funds of the consolidated district as the funds from which they were transferred by the county treasurer. In addition, when two or more ~~elementary~~ districts are consolidated with the mutual assumption of bonded indebtedness, the cash credited to the debt service fund and the bonded indebtedness also ~~shall~~ must be transferred to a similar fund of the consolidated district."

Section 4. Section 20-6-422, MCA, is amended to read:

"20-6-422. District annexation. (1) As used in this section, the following definitions apply:

(a) "Annexing district" means the district to which another district is being attached through an annexation procedure.

(b) "District to be annexed" means the district that is being attached to another district through an annexation procedure.

(2) A district may be annexed to a contiguous district when one of the conditions of 20-6-421 is met in accordance with the following procedure:

(a) An annexation proposition may be introduced in the district to be annexed by either of the two following methods:

(i) the trustees may pass a resolution requesting the county superintendent of the county where the district is located to order an election to consider an annexation proposition for their district; or

(ii) not less than 20% of the electors of the district who are qualified to vote under the provisions of 20-20-301 may petition the county superintendent of the county where the district is located requesting an election to consider an annexation proposition for their district.

(b) The resolution or petition must state whether the annexation is to be made with or without the joint assumption of bonded indebtedness of the annexing district by the district to be annexed and the annexing district.

(3) Before ordering an election on the proposition, the county superintendent of the county where the

district to be annexed is located must first receive from the trustees of the annexing district a resolution giving the county superintendent the authority to annex the district. The resolution must state whether the annexation is to be made with or without the joint assumption of bonded indebtedness of the annexing district by the district to be annexed and the annexing district. The resolution from the annexing district and the resolution or petition from the district to be annexed must agree on whether or not there will be joint assumption of bonded indebtedness. Without agreement, the annexation proposition may not be considered further.

(4) When the county superintendent of the county where the district to be annexed is located has received the resolution authorizing the annexation from the annexing district and the resolution or valid petition from the district to be annexed, the county superintendent shall, within 10 days and as provided by 20-20-201, order the trustees of the district to be annexed to call an annexation election.

(5) The district to be annexed shall call and conduct an election in the manner prescribed in this title for school elections and subject to subsections (6) and (7). Any elector qualified to vote under the provisions of 20-20-301 may vote.

(6) (a) If the district to be annexed is to jointly assume the bonded indebtedness of the annexing district, the ballots must read, after stating the annexation proposition, "FOR annexation with assumption of bonded indebtedness" and "AGAINST annexation with assumption of bonded indebtedness".

(b) When the trustees in ~~each~~ the district conducting ~~an~~ the election canvass the vote under the provisions of 20-20-415, they shall determine the number of votes "FOR" and "AGAINST" the proposition.

(c) The proposition is approved in the district if a majority of those voting approve the proposition.

(7) If the district to be annexed is not to jointly assume the bonded indebtedness of the annexing district, the ballots must read, after stating the annexation proposition, "FOR annexation without assumption of bonded indebtedness" and "AGAINST annexation without assumption of bonded indebtedness". The annexation proposition is approved by a district if a majority of those voting in a district approve the proposition.

(8) After the county superintendent of the county where the district to be annexed is located has received the election certification provided for in 20-20-416 from the trustees of the district conducting the annexation election and if the annexation proposition has been approved by the election, the county superintendent shall order the annexation of the territory of the district voting on the proposition to the district that has authorized the annexation to its territory effective July 1. The order must be issued within 10 days after the receipt of the election certificate. For annexation with joint assumption of bonded indebtedness, the order must specify that there will

be joint assumption of ~~the~~ bonded indebtedness ~~between the~~ of the annexing district by the owners of all taxable real and personal property in the ~~annexed territory and in the annexing district~~ of the district to be annexed. The county superintendent of the county where the district to be annexed is located shall send a copy of the order to the board of county commissioners of each county involved in the annexation order and to the trustees of the districts involved in the annexation order.

(9) If the annexation proposition is disapproved in the district to be annexed, the annexation proposition fails and the county superintendent of the county where the district to be annexed is located shall notify each district of the disapproval of the annexation proposition."

Section 5. Section 20-6-704, MCA, is amended to read:

"20-6-704. Dissolution of K-12 school district. (1) Except as provided in subsection (2), in order to dissolve a K-12 district under the provisions of this section, the trustees of a district shall submit for approval to the electors of the K-12 district a proposition dissolving the K-12 district for the purpose of annexing or consolidating the K-12 district's elementary or high school program with a contiguous school district or districts in an ensuing school fiscal year under the provisions of 20-6-422 or 20-6-423.

(2) If the trustees of the school district determine that the creation or continuation of the K-12 district has resulted in or will result in the loss of federal funding for the elementary or high school programs and that it is in the best interest of the district to dissolve into the original elementary district and high school district that existed prior to the formation of the K-12 district, the trustees may dissolve the district under the following procedure:

(a) The trustees of the district shall pass a resolution requesting the county superintendent to order a dissolution of the district.

(b) When the county superintendent receives the resolution from the district, the county superintendent shall, within 10 days, order the dissolution of the K-12 district into the original elementary district and high school district, to take effect on July 1 of the ensuing school fiscal year. Within 30 days of the order, the county superintendent shall send a copy of the order to the board of county commissioners, the trustees of the district, and the superintendent of public instruction.

(3) If the entire territory of the dissolving K-12 district will be annexed to or consolidated with a contiguous district or districts, the resolution or petition required in subsection (1) or (2) must contain a description of the manner in which the real and personal property and funds of the district are to be apportioned in the dissolution

of the district and the subsequent annexation to or consolidation with one or more other districts. If a portion of the dissolving K-12 district will not be annexed or consolidated with another district or districts, the resolution or petition must contain a description of the manner in which the property, funds, and financial obligations, including bonded indebtedness, of the K-12 district are to be apportioned to the district or districts whose territory is not annexed to or consolidated with another district.

(4) After the county superintendent receives the certificate of election provided for in 20-20-416 from the trustees of the K-12 district and from each district included in a consolidation proposition, the county superintendent shall determine whether the dissolution and annexation or consolidation proposition or propositions have been approved. If the K-12 district has approved the dissolution proposition and each district involved in a consolidation has approved the consolidation proposition, the county superintendent shall, within 10 days after the receipt of the election certificate, order the dissolution of the K-12 district into the original elementary district and high school district, to take effect on July 1 of the ensuing school fiscal year. Within 30 days of the order, the county superintendent shall send a copy of the dissolution order to the board of county commissioners, the trustees of the district included in the dissolution order, and the superintendent of public instruction.

(5) Whenever a K-12 district is dissolved, the following provisions apply:

(a) The trustees of the elementary district whose territory is not annexed or consolidated upon dissolution of the K-12 district are responsible for the execution of remaining financial obligations of the K-12 district and for the apportionment between the elementary and high school programs of any obligations not identified in the resolution required under subsection (3).

(b) The provisions of 20-6-410 apply for tenure teachers in the dissolution of a K-12 district.

(c) For purposes of applying the budget limitation provisions of 20-9-308, the budget of a K-12 district during its last year of operations as a K-12 district will be prorated based on rules promulgated by the superintendent of public instruction."

Section 6. Effective date. [This act] is effective July 1, 2009.

Section 7. Applicability. [This act] applies to school district budgets for the school year beginning July

1, 2009.

- END -

I hereby certify that the within bill,
HB 0057, originated in the House.

Chief Clerk of the House

Speaker of the House

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2009.

President of the Senate

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2009.

HOUSE BILL NO. 57
INTRODUCED BY R. BEAN
BY REQUEST OF THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

AN ACT CLARIFYING SCHOOL DISTRICT CONSOLIDATIONS AND ANNEXATIONS; AMENDING SECTIONS 20-3-312, 20-6-411, 20-6-414, 20-6-422, AND 20-6-704, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND AN APPLICABILITY DATE.